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Provisional summary record of the 4th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 31 January 2003, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. Rosenthal ..... (Guatemala)

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The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (*continued*)

Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau (*continued*) (E/2003/8 and E/2003/L.2)

Draft resolution E/2003/L.2

1. **The President** requested that, on an exceptional basis, the draft resolution should be introduced and adopted in English only, since consultations on the text had concluded only half an hour previously.

2. **Mr. De Santa Clara Gomes** (Portugal), facilitator of the informal consultations, introduced the advance English copy of the draft resolution that was to be subsequently issued as document E/2003/L.2. Members of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau had been united in their common purpose of aiding the people of Guinea-Bissau in their current difficulties. In the draft text, which was balanced and forward-looking, the Economic and Social Council would, inter alia, decide to extend the Group's mandate until the substantive session of the Council in July 2003.

3. **Mr. Roshdy** (Egypt) said that the adoption of the draft text in English only should not constitute a precedent. His delegation had voiced similar concerns in the past to no avail. The President should reiterate in his report that all draft texts for adoption by the Council must be made available to members in all the official languages.

4. **Mr. L'Eglise Costa** (France) supported the statement made by the representative of Egypt and hoped that the situation would not occur again in the future. Since the negotiations on the text had only just been completed, however, and in view of the importance of the matter to Guinea-Bissau, his delegation would not stand in the way of the adoption of the draft resolution.

5. **Mr. Neil** (Jamaica) asked whether all major groupings, including the Group of 77 and China, had been involved in the negotiations on the draft text.

6. **Mr. De Santa Clara Gomes** (Portugal) confirmed that all major groupings, including the Group of 77 and China, had participated in the consultations.

7. **Mr. Loulichki** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, confirmed that the Chairman and several members of the Group of 77 and China had participated in the negotiations. While it would be ideal to have all members of the Group participating in such consultations, that was not always possible because of the size of the Group.

8. **Ms. Pliner-Josephs** (Secretary of the Council) said that the draft text had been submitted to the appropriate Secretariat officials, who had informed the Bureau that it contained no programme budget implications.

9. **The President** said he took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft text to be issued as document E/2003/L.2 and which had been circulated in English only.

10. *Draft resolution E/2003/L.2 was adopted.*

Theme for the operational activities segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*)

11. **The President** drew attention to the text of a draft decision that had been circulated to the Council.

12. **Mr. Aboutahir** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, recalled that, in paragraph 27 of its resolution 56/201, the General Assembly had explicitly requested the Economic and Social Council to consider, at its substantive session of 2003, the conclusions reached at the current triennial policy review on resources for operational activities for development, reviewing the progress made on the issue of funding of development cooperation activities of the United Nations system. The funding of development cooperation activities was a matter of overarching importance to developing countries and the root cause of all the deficiencies in operational activities. At its substantive session of 2003, the Council should focus primarily on the question of the funding of operational activities for development.

13. The Group of 77 and China considered, moreover, that there were elements of micromanagement in the request contained in paragraph 56 of the resolution that the Secretary-General should carry out an impartial and independent assessment of the extent to which the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies at the field level

learned lessons from their evaluations and formulate proposals on how to improve the feedback mechanisms at the field level.

14. Should the Council not find it possible to take a decision at the current meeting, the Group of 77 and China was willing to continue the discussion, particularly on the question of funding of the development cooperation activities of the United Nations system.

15. **Ms. Fragoulopoulou** (Greece), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union generally supported the text of the draft decision, but was willing to continue the discussion and to address the issues raised in General Assembly resolution 56/201.

16. **The President** proposed that informal consultations should continue on the matter under the chairmanship of the representative of Ethiopia and that the Council should return to the issue at a later stage.

17. *It was so decided.*

Economic and Social Council Millennium Award for Good Practices (continued)

18. **The President** drew attention to the background note on the Council's Millennium Award Programme and asked whether the Council was ready to proceed with the pilot project that had been proposed in the background note.

19. **Mr. Shimizu** (Japan) welcomed the institution of the Millennium Award Programme, which would encourage civil society to better realize the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals. There seemed to be a contradiction, however, between the background note, in which it was stated that modest funding for the Millennium Award might be provided by extrabudgetary resources, and the President's assurances to the Council the previous day that the Programme would have no additional budgetary implications. Secondly, the selection of an independent jury, the creation of a database on the Council's web site, and the nomination of candidates would generate additional work both in the Secretariat and in United Nations regional offices. Every effort should be made to minimize the work generated by the Programme and an evaluation of the additional work generated should be made upon the Programme's completion. Lastly, it would be useful to know when, how and by whom the independent jury would be selected.

20. **Ms. McCaan** (United States of America) said that her delegation supported the concept of the Award, but wished to draw attention to a technical discrepancy. The reference to "Millennium Development Goals" in both the title and the body of the background note should be replaced by "Goals of the Millennium Declaration".

21. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Observer for Morocco) said that, given the limited time available, further consideration of the matter should be deferred to the Council's next meeting.

22. **Mr. Khan** (Director of the Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination), replying to the questions raised, said that the implementation of the Award Programme contained no programme budget implications. Funding was to be provided by various foundations and expressions of support had already been received from a number of them. As for the concern that the establishment of a database and selection of a jury might generate additional work, he was confident that those activities would not affect the normal work of the Secretariat. Advantage would be taken of the resources of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section and of the Council's working relationships with national bodies, Resident Representatives and community-based organizations at the national level. Concerning the method to be used in the selection of the jury, the best way would be for the Bureau, in consultation with agencies of the United Nations system, to identify a pool of individuals who were representative of the various regions and who had the necessary expertise. The Bureau would, however, consult with the Council before making the final selection.

23. He had no difficulty with the suggestion made by the representative of the United States concerning the references to "Millennium Development Goals". Those references could be amended both in the title and in the text of the background note to read "implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration".

24. **Mr. Stanislavov** (Russian Federation) welcomed the institution of the Award Programme, but wondered how the Secretariat would choose potential candidates when applications were limited to non-governmental organizations. He expressed concern at the exclusion of

the private sector, despite the fact that it had a major role to play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

25. **Mr. Khan** (Director of the Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination) said that the scope of the Award was necessarily limited. While a separate project for the private sector might be envisaged, the aim of the current Programme was to identify previously unrecognized grass-roots projects that had achieved positive results. The Award was intended for civil society development initiatives at the operational level. Current development initiatives supported by the private sector were often either philanthropic or market-oriented, which raised the question of whether they should be included, given their extremely wide scope and the possibility of conflicts of interests. That was the reason for the decision to reward civil society actors.

Other matters

26. **Mr. Nteturuye** (Burundi) enquired about the official letter his country had addressed to the President of the Council in September 2002 requesting that an ad hoc advisory group be set up for Burundi. A positive response, which was still being awaited, would show that the Council was prepared to give Burundi the attention it deserved. At the time of the letter's dispatch, a peace agreement had already been signed and a transitional Government established. Since then, ceasefire agreements had been signed in Pretoria and Dar es Salaam, and only one of the three armed groups was failing to respect them. Certain technical problems associated with the implementation of the ceasefire agreements were still under negotiation.

27. At the request of the Security Council, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had agreed to resume assistance to Burundi and donors attending the second round table in Geneva had agreed to contribute over $US 905 million in recognition of the progress achieved by the peace process. It remained to be seen whether such pledges would be promptly honoured.

28. While the war was not over, the truce was generally being observed and violations were more often than not linked to the absence of observers. The African Union had decided to send in a force, but the funds for the troops promised by various countries had still not been raised. He would be happy to provide any additional information that members might request concerning the situation in Burundi.

29. **The President** recalled that when the Council had first examined the request, it had decided that the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict was not in a position to deal with two countries at once and that it was preferable to issue the report on Guinea-Bissau before turning to other cases. The Bureau would consider Burundi's request as soon as possible and bring it before the Council.

30. **Mr. Loulichki** (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed support for Burundi's request, which was a demonstration of faith in the United Nations system and offered an opportunity for the international community to show its solidarity. He commended Burundi for the constructive results it had achieved. Nothing in the framework resolution on such ad hoc advisory groups (2002/1) prevented the Council from giving Burundi a positive reply. Acceding to the request would also be symbolic of the political will to help countries in similar situations.

31. **The President** said that the Bureau would consider the matter in the near future.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.